

Copyright  
by  
Robert A. Fancher  
2012

**The Report Committee for Robert A Fancher**  
**Certifies that this is the approved version of the following report:**

***Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture  
through Online Collaboration***

**APPROVED BY**  
**SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

**Supervisor:**

---

Kathleen Tyner

---

Bruce Pennycook

***Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture  
through Online Collaboration***

**by**

**Robert A. Fancher, B.S.**

**Report**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Master of Arts**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**December 2012**

## **Abstract**

### ***Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture through Online Collaboration***

Robert A. Fancher, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

Supervisor: Kathleen Tyner

*Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture through Online Collaboration* is a report of results from a content analysis that analyzes the role of online participatory culture for community development and social capital for a local underground EDM ‘scene’ (Electronic Dance Music) in Dallas, TX. This study analyzes DallasDanceMusic.com (DDM), one of the first and largest message board communities to support the EDM community in Dallas, TX since 1994. The study measures participatory culture and social capital using content analysis of the site during high profile activity for a four-month period in 2012.

## Table of Contents

I. Introduction .....	1
II. Background and Significance of the Study .....	7
III. Research Methodology .....	8
IV. Results of the DDM Content Analysis: Meltdown 2012 .....	13
V. Discussion of Results .....	18
VI. Conclusion .....	24
Bibliography .....	28

## List of Tables

Table 1:	Posts to the Music/DJ/Producer Forum .....	14
Table 2:	Posts to the General Discussion Forum .....	15
Table 3:	Posts to The Chill Room Forum .....	16

## **I. Introduction**

This research studies the role of online participatory culture for community development and social capital for a local underground EDM ‘scene’ (Electronic Dance Music) in Dallas, TX. This study analyzes DallasDanceMusic.com (DDM), one of the first and largest message board communities to support the EDM community in Dallas, TX since 1994. The study measures participatory culture and social capital using content analysis of the site during high profile activity for a four-month period in 2012.

DDM was originally created as Dallasraves.org in 1994 and was for many years a low-traffic informational source for DFW dance addicts before later maturing into a high-population network of more than 10,000 registered unique members with active user profiles, post history, and avatar images.

The original management and owners of DDM.com held control of the site’s structure and content until 2006, when the domain and all included web content were sold for less than \$5,000. New ownership initially agreed to continue with the traditional of a front welcome (updated once per month) with pictures and hyperlinks for “Featured DJs”, but that front page would be de-activated in 2008 to direct traffic straight towards the Message Board itself.

The DDM web community is cutting edge and high tech. Users have access to information and resources dedicated to the latest in technology and culture within Electronic Dance Music on the Internet as well as in Dallas/Fort Worth in order to connect one another within a larger social network framework. There are distinct sub-groups that come together to participate in the bonding between peers. The Internet provides a broader network of connections to expand participation, communication and sharing for smaller affinity groups of fans and professionals who possibly would not have the same opportunities to implement new ideas, innovations or discussion as theorized by social capital scholars such as Granovetter (Granovetter, 1983, 202).

These participants each have a different role set within the community and seek out information as well as networking opportunities at their own pace. The connections made within an Internet forum have the potential to bridge weak ties among network leaders that make for substantial collaboration between clusters of interest that might not otherwise gather in face to face settings such as clubs or other music venues.

Collaboration between members that may engage in real life is likely increased by new communication and participation taking place on the latest message board and social media integration.

*Participatory Culture* has been hailed by many as the new way to interpret online communication and even to enhance the quality of exchange between members, or self-described affinity groups (Jenkins, et. al. 2006). With the increase of resources for online



media consumption online communities provide a space for critical discussion of a parallel 'real world' community that exists beyond the online virtual network.

According to Putnam (1991), the social capital within America's cities may be crumbling for some groups of social actors who have not kept up with technology. For example, Putnam writes about the declining social stature and popularity of bowling leagues in America were identified as a notable decline in the 90s. Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* begins to illustrate the rate at which traditional social structures (group activity) has declined during a period of time from (1975-1991) which he predicted at the time to continue at the same pace for some time to come.

Putnam theorizes that large-scale social institutions play a far less prominent role in public life, but he continues to believe in the strength of strong personal bonds between friends. "We get together with friends about twice as often as we attend organized meetings and we hang out at bars at twice as often as we engage in community services." He concludes (1641/14255, 1991). He later theorizes that public identity for individuals within civic organizations has declined rapidly in recent decades with the advent of the Internet and that people are less likely to report themselves as part of a labor movement, or a PTA organization, or other special interest groups.

Lin also theorizes that at the turn of the century, a new type of community function could be seen as emerging on the World Wide Web. Cyber-networks (virtual online

communities) are noted as a popular hub for the transaction of emerging social capital resources. Those with dense networks of personal communication are less likely to seek out online communities. Members with looser connections, or weak social ties, are more likely to participate in online communities, such as message boards, that can lead to stronger ties and establish productive collaboration between the two parallel Internet and real-world affinity cultures (Lin 2001).

Within a study of Internet users on a popular web site message board Wellman et. al. (1998) considered the possibility that members of an online community who participate in social capital exchange could lead to a new type of Participatory Capital Community around voluntary organizations. According to Wellman, these communities can “afford opportunities for people to bond, create joint accomplishments, and aggregate and articulate their demands and desires” within a network community of social bonds around a common cause or interest. (Wellman et. al., 437).

In relation to the DallasDanceMusic message board study, the “Community Commitment” between members of the Internet message board at (DDM), as measured by member posts, seems to instill a strong sense of belonging that may strengthen a willingness to work together and collaborate effectively on projects online and events in the real-world local dance music scene. However, since its inception in 1994, the message board posts have declined, reaching their peak the early 2000s. In a 2011 *New York Post* article, columnist Virginia Heffernan notes the decline of message boards &

virtual communities based on a “web 1.0” type of “nostalgic” interaction between members during communication. She goes on to surmise that while almost all message board activity across the Internet has suffered immensely since the adoption of a new “Web 2.0 neighborhood” approach as offered with Facebook, some message board communities have been able to sustain this transition and those tend to be ones dedicated to non-profit groups or fan clubs. For instance, she mentions that the Jazz Aficionados web site, ([forums.allaboutjazz.com](http://forums.allaboutjazz.com)) is still a very popular forum at the time of her writing. Heffernan points out that “Internet Message Boards were almost invisible to anyone intent on profiting off Web traffic,” and that these large web site forums require immense server space for archival and searching of all posted material. This decline has an economic implication. The message boards often have low staff capacity and are not able to integrate advertising as easily as some other types of web communities. According to Heffernan, message boards have major problems with maintaining profitable models for the owners of these message boards and websites.

P. Drentea and J. Moren-Cross (2005) investigated the potential for social capital and social networking potential within virtual community message boards on the Internet. After studying the message board community for a Motherhood forum, they came to 3 basic conclusions about the nature of online discussions. According to Drentea & Moren-Cross, communication that may lead to social capital exchange between members for a variety of factors is organized into 3 categories: 1) Social Support; 2) Instrumental support; and 3) community building (920).

M. Wasko (2005) speculates that while virtual network communities may positively lead to development of social capital transfers between members, it remains unclear why strangers are so keen and willing to share their data in the first place. These members are strangers who are willing to publish their results, share a story, or to debate opinions. Within a study of archived virtual community data, Wasko determined that members of a virtual community (whether or not they were seen as active participants beforehand), will act out and share information with the message board community, “when they perceive that it enhances their professional reputations, when they have the experience to share, and when they are structurally embedded in the network” (35). She goes on to express concern for the participation of so-called “lurkers”, to be defined as a regular viewer of a virtual community that either has not registered an account, officially, or simply chooses not to make contributions to discussion threads regularly. Her study concludes that contributions to the virtual message board community will often occur with almost zero regard for expected reciprocity from the community. Wasko also determines that for these passive users are an active part of any virtual community, even if they are not prominent and active members.

## **II. Background and Significance of the Study**

*Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture through Online Collaboration* contributes to the documentation of social capital studies in a virtual message board web site that meets the criteria for many of the same types of other previously studied underground communities published by prior scholars. This study explores the role of one online community, the DallasDanceMusic message board as a hub for social capital and participatory culture in the electronic dance music community in Dallas, TX. In the process, the DallasDanceMusic message board provides grounds for further research about role of the site in fostering online and offline communication and the future potential for the use of message boards for community building in the future.

### **III. Research Methodology for the Study**

Content analysis was used to measure attributes related to the research questions for postings from May 19th – June 16th, 2012 on the Dallas Dance Music.com ([www.dallasdancemusic.com](http://www.dallasdancemusic.com)) online message board. The time frame was selected to reflect a time of high activity corresponding with the Meltdown Festival series (June 2nd, 2012) which is a major festival event thrown once per summer that brings together many different social groups within the EDM fan/scene culture into one venue.

The content analysis collects data related to pre-festival hype, the announcements and link-up posts before the festival and the party reviews after the festival. This larger sample proved useful for data collection from certain forums with little year-round activity, and allows for all discussion board posts that may be related to Meltdown 2012, such as pre-party planning or post-party reviews.

Total user traffic statistics from the DDM site are not available and so the researcher counted individual posts. In addition, qualitative comments from 2009 and 2010 were selected to support the study's findings related to user traffic over time. The study worked from the following research questions:

RQ1: How does participation in an online electronic dance music (EDM) community

contribute to local social and artistic practices related to the social and artistic practices of DJs and amateur producers?

RQ2: How does participation in an online electronic dance music (EDM) community contribute to strong and weak ties in the EDM community?

RQ3: What does it mean for a virtual community if a substantial number of visitors are not as actively engaged with community discussion as more public users are?

The following considerations are relevant to the research methodology for the study and provide a context for the analysis:

1. Discussions in any one part of DDM virtual community are publicly visible to all registered members as well as anonymous visitors. The critical discussion of DJ performance, Style, Presentation and Promotion reach a broader audience through broadcast online and the debates that take place are archived for future (EDM) fans in DFW.
2. The posting and sharing of personal knowledge or stories within the appropriate DDM discussion forum allows for connections between members to bridge into new social spaces/ Common interest in one musical performance or artist may bring strangers together to meet at a show and go on to build a stronger tie within the larger EDM

community as whole.

3. DDM Community has always maintained a seemingly larger number of anonymous browsers who have access to information on the site, but neither register or sign up for a full account. These viewers may face a struggle to gain recognition within the social network compared to those registered with the community and making many posts.

Discrete sections from the DDM Message Board were used to organize and select posts related to the research questions. The following forums and sub forums were selected to measure attributes related the research questions:

**Posts to the Music/DJ/Producer Forum.** This section is devoted to EDM DJ and Producer talk discussion of practical discussion in the pursuit of DJing. Many DDM members will choose to discuss new ideas for their own personal new productions in this message board, seeking critical advice from other online fans of EDM. Some of the most heated debates that take place within the Music/DJ/Producer forum are debates about the style of a DJ performance or the tools used to create a music mix. EDM Geeks are comfortable discussing some of the most detailed and granular topics in Electronic Dance Music within this forum.

**Posts to the New Events Forum.** Within the New Events Forum, a DDM message board user can find listings for all of the most popular weekly events from the city's best-known



DJ/club promoters. This is arranged so that a casual viewer of the board's home page will have an opportunity to view upcoming events inside of a traditional Forum thread, in addition to the Calendar function used by promoters to excite crowds and give directions for parties.

The Calendar Function is a sub-forum of the New Events Forum and serves a dual purpose with the DDM Community: it can stand alone and be viewed online as a pure day-by-day listing for parties: when, where, who, and admission cost. The calendar is also integrated into the message board at all levels as well and this allows for promoters of parties to list a new DJ event in the "calendar" section and at the same time, start a brand new topic for discussion about this very same event listing within the appropriate message board. Users must be certified by site moderators in order to post new events to the Calendar section. The result is a very quick process that allows for almost anyone to post a new DJ Party event when they need to.

**The Useless Blabber Forum.** Fan culture is on vibrant display within the "Useless Blabber" Forum on the DDM message board. The title of the forum belies critical discussion and feedback about the world around each DDM user in this section. There are no rules, or guidelines, about what can and cannot be posted within this section, as there are with every other type of forum at DDM. The Useless Blabber Forum can be thought of as a "general posts" area in which members connect to each other on many levels beyond electronic dance music. Discussion within this forum often branch into further communication/collaboration

between members with the exchange of Twitter accounts, Facebook names, or even email addresses.

Content analysis was used to measure attributes related to the research questions for postings from May 19th – June 16th, 2012 on the Dallas Dance Music.com ([www.dallasdancemusic.com](http://www.dallasdancemusic.com)) online message board. The time frame was selected to reflect a time of high activity corresponding with the Meltdown Festival series (June 2nd, 2012) which is a major festival event thrown once per summer that will bring together many different social groups within the EDM fan/scene culture into one venue.

Discrete sections from the DDM Message Board were used to organize and select posts related to the research questions. The following attributes were measured in the following forums and sub forums of the DDM message board:

#### **IV. Results of the DDM Content Analysis: Meltdown 2012**

Results of the content analysis are organized by the analysis frames, in order of popularity, as measured by number of posts. Public forums available at DallasDanceMusic (DDM) provide for 3 sections of message board content: the Music/DJ/Producer section, a space for New Music announcements and discussion of style and taste between artists and promoters and fans; The Main Room, a place to post new events and general discussion; and The Chill Room, a space for opinions and rants.

Within each of 3 main forums are distinct sub-categories of message postings. A set of volunteer members from the forum work as content moderators equipped to moderate the user comments for appropriate forums. Three tables display results related to activity of discussion forums for each of distinct sections for DDM community. Measurements were taken during a 1-month time period beginning 2 weeks before and two weeks after the major electronic dance music festival, Meltdown 2012; which takes place on June 2, 2012.

The **Music/DJ/Producer** section of DDM's chat forums is intended for discussion of Electronic Dance Music topics and posts concerning DJ performance, style. Reviews of new releases, both professional albums and amateur releases, are also prominent in this forum of DDM.

Within the Music Forum is a sub-forum called **New Music Releases** where DDM users are encouraged to post details about new EDM titles for any kind of media, such as vinyl, cd albums, or digital download. These New Releases are almost always coming from digital record labels and sold exclusively for download in compressed waveform. The results of the content analysis show that the most common form for a post will include: album cover, artist title, song/album title, label information, and a hyperlink for purchase of this particular album at several different online distributors of independent electronic dance music productions. Table 1 displays the total number of posts to this forum.

**Table 1: Posts to the Music/DJ/Producer Forum (n=57)**

(May 19-June 16, 2012)

Music	Total Posts
Music/DJ/Producer Talk	32
New Music Releases	25

The Music/DJ/Producer Talk is the most popular area of this forum. Results show 32 new posts (56%) in the Music/DJ/Producer Talk section and 25 new posts in the New Music Releases section (44%) for a grand total of 57 new threads for discussion during the 4 week Meltdown 2012 sample period.

The next domain for content analysis was the New Events sub-forum of the General Discussion Forum (also called “The Main Room.”) The New Events Forum is the place to post and discuss upcoming events in the Dallas / Ft. Worth area taking place at EDM venues for EDM fans. New posts can be created by any DDM member but it is the promoters for each event who are generally responsible to post to this forum with information and media to preview an upcoming party. These promoters have organized local ‘dance collectives’ or “tribes” that will pool resources in pursuit of bigger parties for their DJs and more options during the week for the fans.

**Table 2: Posts to the General Discussion Forum (n=41)**

(May 19-June 16, 2012)

<b>The Main Room</b>	<b>Total Posts</b>
New Events Announcement	28
Classified	7
Link-Up	5
Party Reviews	1
Raves, Rants, and Complaints	0

A total of 41 discussion threads were counted in the New Events sub-forum of the General Discussion Forum. Most of the activity in General Discussion (The Main Room) is dedicated to the New Events section (68%). Other sub-forums include Classified

(17%), Link-up (12%), and Party Reviews (2%). No posts were made to the Raves, Rants and Complaints section during the study's time period.

The third section analyzed by the study was The Chill Room Forum. The Chill Room contains two sub forums related to random, non-moderated discussion (Useless Blabber) and awareness of risks and benefits of the dance music scene and political statements (Awareness and Politics).

The Useless Blabber sub-forum is a place for chat and discussion by any **DDM** member regarding any topic that does not fit within the structured forum postings. A review of the posts indicates that members on the **DDM** message board love to debate the "*State of the Scene*," or similar discussions about the fading underground rave culture.

The Awareness and Politics sub-forum is meant for constructive discussion about Awareness of critical issues related to the EDM scene. Drug abuse is a major topic of discussion for this forum.

**Table 3: Posts to The Chill Room Forum (n=12)**

(May 19-June 16, 2012)

The Chill Room	Total Posts
Useless Blabber	12
Awareness and Politics	0

As seen in Table 3, all of the postings within The Chill Room appear within the “Useless Blabber” topic category. There were zero posts within Awareness and Politics during the four-week sample period.

## V. Discussion of Results

The number of posts analyzed on the DallasDanceMusic message board from May 19-June 16, 2012 indicate the most active area of the DDM site is in the DJ/Producer Music Forum. Although there are almost 10,000 registered users of the DDM site, there only 57 unique posts to the DJ/Producer Music Forum during the time period studied. This indicates that the accounts are either dormant or that users of this site are primarily “lurkers.”

A comparison of past years of the DDM message board indicates far more user activity. For example, **Meltdown 2009** was the talk of the town in the summer of 2012 and users were posting dozens of new message threads per day covering every part of fandom that **EDM** enthusiasts know. Although this study did not have access to user traffic data from 2009, posts from the Meltdown 2009 time frame indicate that this same DDM community message board was ablaze with activity as recently as 2009. The “Announcement” thread for Meltdown 2009 Festival was followed by a hearty welcome within DDM community and this initial post by **JeremyWord** (a major figure in DFW Dance music) was followed by 17 pages of replies, with each page containing 15 responses from unique members.

Within **New Events**  
Prototype Industries presents MELTDOWN : FESTIVAL FOR THE FEARLESS /  
Sat Nov 21, 2009  
Prototype Industries presents  
In Association with Full Access & Insomniac  
**MELTDOWN : FESTIVAL FOR THE FEARLESS**  
Saturday, November 21st, 2009  
Dallas, TX  
Jeremy Word, 9/25/09



In 2009, more than 250 enthusiastic replies to the initial Event Announcement discussion thread were posted before the first record had even been dropped for that night's party.

In comparison, when JeremyWord makes the same type of announcement post for the Meltdown 2012 festival, but the replies are sparse and short.

**MELTDOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL : Unity Thru Music // Saturday June 2 2012 //**  
**QuikTrip Park**

Prototype Industries, Full Access & Disco Donnie present  
**MELTDOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL : Unity Thru Music**  
Saturday, June 2nd, 2012  
**JeremyWord, 6-02-12**

Only 7 posts by 2 unique visitors reply to this announcement thread by **JeremyWord**.

There are some posts in other forums (Link-up) and (Useless Blabber) that do contain discussion about the Meltdown 2012 festival, but there are fewer posts than in previous years.

A similar comparison can be made between 2009 and 2012 in The Event Reviews Forum.

The following is the first review post of Meltdown 2009 after the party.

#### **Meltdown (2009)**

First time to see David Guetta, he was great! Had the crowd really into it. Good turnout, not as packed as Tiesto but good crowd. Aude was good playing some good remixes, A-trak showing some good skills, Kid Sister was ok in parts but not really my cup of tea,

but I like the idea of having band/DJ hybrid acts, there are others out there that I would like better...

The biggest disappointment was that Lonestar side room. Need to improve the production value of that sideroom because it wasn't very happening, you couldn't really see the DJ stage very well when you walk into the room, the lighting wasn't good, it smells and looks foggy/musty and I noticed that people would walk in for a minute and then walk out and go back to the main room where all the good lighting and video screens were, wish Morgan Page could have been in the main room...

**Dallasmale33, 11/19/09**

The Meltdown 2009 review in the Event Reviews Forum is followed by 7 pages of replies and 105 unique posts. Follow-up posts (within this same main discussion thread) show even more activity in the weeks following the event. Users were eager to post content related to detailed accounts and reviews of personal experiences as well as commentary on DJ style and music presentation. With a discussion thread lasting for over 100 comments, the Meltdown 2009 Event Review Discussion thread was extremely popular that year. When compared with activities related to the following post in 2012, a decline in user activity is apparent:

**Meltdown 2012**

Had a good time overall at Meltdown. I liked the fact that at Quiktrip Park there are plenty of seats to sit down in the stands. I thought a lot of the earlier acts were either pleasant and others almost annoying. The real show started for me with Sander Van Doorn. Nadia Ali was great as usual. Steve Angello was good...

One request I have for any future shows at Quiktrip, please make sure that there is a bathroom attendant or custodian that keeps the bathrooms clean because apparently 17yr old- twenty something ravers don't know how to use the restrooms without destroying the toilets or otherwise rendering them useless.

\$20 for parking was completely ridiculous and excessive.

**Dallasmale33, 06/03/12**

*Followed by 12 unique replies on 1 total page of responses.*

The Meltdown 2012 Event Review thread did not inspire as many supportive or passionate postings as could be seen in 2009. There were a total of 7 replies to the Meltdown 2012 Review discussion, as compared to more than 100 replies about the same event in 2009.

At the beginning of 2009, Dallas Dance Music linked to a Facebook page, with regularly posted newsfeed updates that link to special deals at clubs and dance music events. Users of the DDM board are still contacting each other. They are still visiting dance clubs in Dallas and they are certainly still releasing new DJ Mixes. Increasingly, if DDM site activity is any indication, these media and information are disproportionately shared via Facebook directly to friends.

Results of the content analysis indicate that although the electronic dance music culture remains strong in Dallas, TX, the DDM message board is experiencing a decline in user activity. Several factors may contribute to the decline in user traffic on the DallasDanceMusic message board.

1. The integration of Facebook accounts into the **DDM** forum during a period of transition in 2008 allowed for users to connect to each other online. It may be that it is more efficient for them to use Facebook to check into the community than to engage in the focused discussion of the DDM Forum. Facebook users do not have to have “friend” status to see the posts about EDM. In this way, the DDM community connects and

collaborates with both a wider audience, using weak and strong ties on Facebook. This is a broader network than the stronger ties that they use on the DDM forum. The following post indicates a shift from DDM to Facebook.

**Re: DDM FORUM FAILURE - have you ever seen a forum fail as hard as DDM?**

ddm is mostly just a casualty from facebook's popularity. it's a local board, so i can see why someone with a facebook would just use that instead. i stop in every once in awhile here but mostly i just use fb. anyone i'd care to speak with is on my facebook. but, if any of you who aren't on my list care to add me my email is moobz6925@gmail.com.  
-m, 3/12/12

2. The amount of hosting space available to amateur artists has increased and so more users than ever can put their work online on the DDM site. It is cheap and it's easy for amateur artists and promoters to continue to post to a targeted audience online to the DDM site.

User Seinmeil, 5/30/12

**Let's Revitalize the RAVE/Club scene....**

I'm talking about a revolution again! Let's change the world, get people out dancing and doing great things at clubs and renegades, let's find a legal way to bring it back! Let's dress up and wear braceletts, and PLUR shirts! Let's get the dubstep in check and get rid of it, most of it anyways. Let's find new ways to get this site bumping like it was when it was draves, come on people! I want the scene back! Do whatever it takes.

3. The New Events Message Board was merged with the Calendar function in summer of 2008 in order to allow for synchronized browsing of the entire DDM online network. When a user posts information for a new party in DFW, that event is then automatically listed within the "New Events" message board – instead of requiring the user to actually make a 2nd informational post.

The practical effects are immediately appreciated by active users and passive ones alike. As of 2012, there still exists a vibrant outlet designed for users to review, rate, praise or complain about absolutely any DJ event listed at DDM using the Calendar Function.

The calendar function continues to be of use to promoters of parties and club owners.

Calendar/Forum sub-forum allows for comments by users on Calendar events automatically and remains one of the more viable components of the DDM site.

**In Events**

From the people that brought you Barcadia, Beauty Bar, Meltdown & Full Access bring you a new spot to dance your ass off! If you're the type of person that like good old fashion house music...ala chuck love, mark farina, miguel migs and allllllllll the above and in between....like it'll do dallas. we got surprises coming your way starting june 16th

**GranadaDallas, 6/16/12**

4. DJ/Music/Producer Talk has traditionally been the gathering point for the most potent discussions between members and remains a valuable place for dialogue between amateurs and professionals in the EDM community. The following post from 2012 indicates the way that the DDM message board is a central gathering place that supports a range of users in the EDM community.

**in Music/DJ/Producer Talk**

**TrueLou, 10/28/12**

**A Place for House?**

I love all forms of EDM, but I consider myself a house purist. Aside from going to a show when a major headliner comes to town, I don't know of many places to go in Dallas for regular house music. I'm 26 and I like my house on the deep side - sexy, soulful, and sophisticated. Warm bass lines, smooth vocals, with a splash of funk is right up my alley. Where's a place in Dallas that's all about the music and caters to a self-proclaimed house aficionado? I'm not necessarily looking only for deep house, but mainly house sounds and vibes. Examples of what I'm looking for would be Miguel Migs, Mark Farina, Ben Watt, older Kaskade, Late Night Alumni, [Hed Kandi](#) tracks, Stereo Sushi, Defected...I hope you get my drift.

## VI. Conclusions

*Club Texas: Building Community in Electronic Music Fan Culture through Online Collaboration* studies the role of online participatory culture for community development and social capital for the electronic dance music scene through content analysis of a seminal local online message board, DallasDanceMusic.com (DDM).

When a user logs into the forum, s/he can see the total number of users who are logged in at any given time. Yet few of them actively post to the site or engage in dialogue.

Although 10,000 users are registered, at the time of the study from May 19-June 16, 2012, very few of these registered members are actually making posts and most could be characterized as *lurkers*.

There have always been more lurkers than active users in the history of the DDM site; the total user traffic has become more passive over time. These less active users contribute to a participation gap on the site. Some of this may be due to the fact that the site is increasingly automated with fewer moderators or gatekeepers to review and approve posts.

The leaders in the community are often moderators or administrators and these leaders are increasingly not as necessary to the site due to the increasingly efficient automated system that is available online. For example, the DDM Forum/Calendar section is able

and ready to process as many events and discussions as users are willing to engage with but with this automation process. As a result, the need for active leadership within the virtual community was diminished and the natural leaders within the community were no longer able to gain as much support as in the years past. One might assume that this would result in more un-moderated postings. However, the postings have declined in recent years.

One factor leading to this decline was the introduction of Facebook on the DallasDanceMusic site. Facebook Connect was a popular feature when installed to the message board in 2009. Within one year of Facebook integration into the DDM forums, however, member J. Feas is not impressed by the amount of participation taking place with the **DDM** virtual facebook community.

**DDM facebook has 419 members**

wonder if those people look at ddm? there sure arent 419 regular posters.

**J. Feas, 04/07/10**

**Re: DDM facebook has 419 members**

/sigh.

lurkers read here & don't post. some posted a long time ago & got tired of being told their posts weren't cool enough. they tell me irl every so often.

**Girl, 04/07/10**

**J. Feas** points out the obvious problem. Although the site had 419 Facebook members in 2010, this does not necessary translate into 419 active users. According to some postings, a disconnect between virtual DDM community spirit and the new rise of

Facebook activity is palpable as members come to the realization of the long-term effects for Facebook integration. Passive participants of the message board are again referenced by a further reply from **Girl**, stating plainly her opinion to define the decline of DDM Message Board Activity. Many of the regular users of DDM community have grown hostile towards passive members – questioning their spirit in the “rave scene”, asking out loud if they really are there to support dance music (2010).

The automated New Events / Calendar functionality of the DDM site may lead to a more passive Membership base. A visitor can browse the calendar for specific types of event at certain types of establishments, giving the DFW public a great resource for keeping track with new Electronic Dance Music events in the area.

The user directory of ‘active’ DDM virtual identities (10,000 unique names) is a relic of a bygone era for DFW Electronic Dance Music Internet discussion that apparently peaked during a period of 1998-2004. Today, discussion and replies are still reserved for the most high-profile topics for the DDM virtual community. Although new threads in most of the forums each week and new replies almost every day can be seen, and regular members are still there to make vital new posts, activity on the site is dwindling. Users tend to gravitate to Facebook to participate in the community. Increasingly, the EDM community uses Facebook to reinforce their strong ties and to reach out for weak ties. The energy from the forum has been sapped and no one in the community is under the



impression that it will be this very same message board that may bring them together in the future, as the original site did on its launch in 1994.

## Works Cited

Drentea, Patricia, and Jennifer Moren-Cross. "Social Capital and Social Support on the Web: The Case of an Internet Mother Site." *Sociology of Health & Illness* 27.7 (2005) : 920-43. Print.

Heffernan, Virginia. "The Old Internet Neighborhoods." *New York Times*. 10 July, 2011. Web. 1 Dec. 2012. <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/10/remembrance-of-message-boards-past/>

Granovetter, Mark. "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited" *Sociological Theory* 1 (1983) : 201-33. Print.

Jenkins, Henry, K. Clinton, R. Purushotma, A. Robinson, and J. Weigel. *Confronting the Challenge of Participatory Culture*. Chicago: MacArthur, 2006. Print.

Lin, Nan. *Social Capital. A Theory of Social Structure and Action*. Vol. 1. Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition, 2001.

Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon and Schuster. Kindle Edition., 2001.

Wasko, Molly M. "Why Should I Share? Examining Social Capital and Knowledge Contribution in Electronic Networks of Practice." *MIS Quarterly*, 29.1 (2005): 35-75. Print.

Wellman, Barry, Anabel Q. Haase, James Witte, and Keith Hampton. "Does the Internet Increase, Decrease, or Supplement Social Capital?: Social Networks, Participation, and Community Commitment." *American Behavioral Scientist* 45.436 (2001): 436-51. Print.